

Mr. Illomas W. Chastain  
Route I, Box 244  
Copperhill, Tennessee 37317

Dear Mr. Chastain:

In March 2001, you wrote to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), about several waste sites and facilities in the Copper Basin Mining and Smelter District near Copperhill,

Tennessee. ATSDR acknowledged your letter to be a petition for a public health assessment. The following outlines A TSDR's response to your petition.

In September 2001, ATSDR conducted a visit to the Copperhill community. LT Kimberly Chapman, Environmental Health Scientist, Division of Health Assessment and Consultation, and Mr. Robert Safay, ATSDR Region IV Senior Representative, met with you, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), and local officials. A TSDR staff also talked to local physicians to learn

more about health concerns in the area. They contacted Tennessee and Georgia cancer registry officials

to request data regarding cancer in the Copperhill area.

At the present time, we do not have sufficient documentation to conduct a public health assessment of

the Copper Basin Mining and Smelter District. Because of community concerns about the various sites,

A TSDR will prepare a public health consultation that documents the evaluation of currently available

information regarding the Copper Basin Mining District contamination. The purpose of the health consultation will be to provide a summary of environmental sampling results and to evaluate possible

human exposures. A TSDR will review and summarize the existing environmental and public health data and make public health recommendations, if necessary,

We plan to have the health consultation completed by March 2002. We will send the health consultation report to you and other community members when it is available. If you have questions or

comments about the report, please contact L T Chapman, at telephone (404 ) 498-0446 to discuss the

report. We have enclosed a fact sheet about A TSDR health consultations.

USEPA continues to characterize site conditions and plans to remediate certain parts of the District: As

USEPA's work progresses, ATSDR may conduct additional public health evaluations. We will notify you if these activities are scheduled.

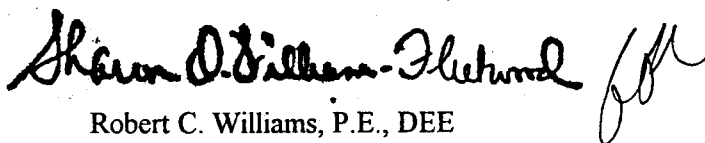
We are aware that occupational exposures that occurred in the past while the mining and processing facilities were operating are a significant part of your concerns. The National Institute for Occupational

Safety and Health (NIOSH) has agreed to respond to those concerns. We suggest that you continue to work with Dr. Allison Tepper at NIOSH, telephone (513) 841-4382, about your occupational concerns.

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Thank you for referring your concerns to ATSDR. We welcome your comments about this response and the planned health consultation. Please contact LT Chapman or Mr. Safay, at telephone (404) 562-1782. If you have questions about our response to your petition, please contact CAPT John Steward, ATSDR Petition Coordinator, at telephone (404) 498-0444. Community members may also contact ATSDR by calling our toll-free telephone number, 1-888-42-ATSDR (1-888-422-8737).

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert C. Williams", followed by a stylized flourish or initials.

Robert C. Williams, P.E., DEE  
Assistant Surgeon General  
Director, Division of Health Assessment and Consultation

Enclosure

cc:

Allison Tepper, NIOSH, Cincinnati, Ohio